

Meeting Date:**Agenda Item No. 12**

Agenda Item: To adopt changes to the Rules governing the Taking of Game Birds (IDAPA 13, Title 01, Chapter 09), specifically, wild turkeys.

Approved by: _____

Prepared by: Don Kemner

Background:

- Winter flocks of wild turkey in Units 1, 2, 3 and 5 have increased beyond property owner's levels of tolerance.
- Since 2004, 730 turkeys have been trapped and moved from Panhandle region winter flocks without a noticeable reduction in hunting opportunity or following year's depredation concerns.
- Hens and toms harvested during same fall season.

Policy issues:

- Increase hunting opportunity is a strategy of the Department's Compass.
- Adapt regulations to achieve population objective is a strategy of the Department's Compass.
- Commission has authority to reduce tag price (36:415)

Public Involvement Process:

- Regions provided the public with opportunities to comment on Department proposed changes.
- A questionnaire was e-mailed to a sample of turkey hunters.
- Complaints filed by landowners.

Justification:

Seasons and bag limits are designed to manage Idaho's wild turkey population for maximum hunting opportunity while considering biological and sociological implications.

Action Requested:

Commission adoption of the Department's recommendations

Staff Recommendations:

Recommendations are designed to increased fall harvest of turkeys in Panhandle units where turkey populations are high and landowner complaints persist. The goal is to find an equilibrium where public hunting is sustainable and conflicts on private lands are reduced and tolerated. Trapping and translocation from these units will continue to augment other populations when appropriate.

- Panhandle region fall season is September 15 through October 31 in Units 1, 2 (except Farragut State Park and Farragut WMA), 3, 4, 4A, 5, and 6.

Department Recommendation: Extend fall season to December 15 in Units 1, 2 (except Farragut State Park and Farragut WMA), 3, 4, 4A, 5, and 6.

- Fall hunting turkey tag prices are either \$19.75 for general tag or \$12.25 for extra tags, including the vendor fee.
Department Recommendation: Create a fall general season turkey tag valid for units 1, 2, 3 and 5. Price of tag would be \$5.00, including the vendor fee. Hunters would be able to purchase up to 5 of these tags.
- Bag limit is 2 any turkeys in the fall.
Department recommendation: Increase bag limit to 5 any turkey in Units 1, 2, 3 and 5 for the 2007 fall season.